

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 DHA-02 SSM-03 OMB-01 AID-05 SCA-01
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /081 W
-----141519Z 024019 /46

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1809

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PFOR, PINS, IS, US
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: PALESTINIAN PRISONERS IN ISRAELI PRISONS

REFS: (A) STATE 56006 (NOTAL) (B) JERUSALEM 0365 (NOTAL),
(C) STATE 54974 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: TWO REPORTS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED
IN RCENT DAYS BY THE JERUSALEM POST REGARDING THE
DEPARTMENT'S REPORT TO THE CONGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN
ISREL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. SIMILAR REPORTS
HAVE APPEARED IN THE HEBREW PRESS. UNDER THE HEADLINE
"STATE DEPARTMENT RAPS ISRAEL ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN
TERRITORIES" AND ATTRIBUTED TO ITS WASHINGTON CORRESPON-
DENT THE POST PUBLISHED THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE ON MARCH 13:

2. BEGIN TEXT: THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS CRITICIZED
ISRAEL'S TREATMENT OF ARABS LIVING IN THE TERRITORIES
CAPTURED DURING THE 1967 WAR.

3. IN A REPORT TO CONGRESS YESTERDAY ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS
SITUATION IN ISRAEL AND THE ADMINISTERED TERRITORIES,
THE STATE DEPARTMENT NOTED THAT, AS OF MAY 1976,
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3,100 ARABS FROM THE TERRITORIES WERE UNDER ARREST.

4. THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PRE-1967 ISRAEL
WAS CONSIDERABLY BETTER,THE REPORT SAID.

5. THE REPORT WAS ONE OF 82 SUMMARIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS
IN FOREIGN RECIPIENTS OF U.S. ASSITANCE, REQUIRED BY

THE CONGRESS AS PART OF LAST YEAR'S FOREIGN AID BILL.
THE REPORTS WERE PREPARED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT
OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS.

6. REGARDING THE SITUATION IN THE TERRITORIES,
THE REPORT CHARGED THAT ISRAELI AUTHORITIES HAD USED
EXCESSIVE FORCE IN QUELLING DEMONSTRATIONS LAST YEAR,
HAD RAZED HOUSES OF SUSPECTED TERRORISTS, HAD VIOLATED
ARTICLE 49 OF THE GENEVA CONVENTION BY SUMMARILY
EXPPELLING RESIDENTS, AND HAD HELD SUSPECTED TERRORISTS
FOR UP TO SIX MONTHS WITHOUT FILING SPECIFIC CHARGES.

7. WITHIN ISRAEL PROPER, THE REPORT, SAID, ARAB CITIZENS
FEEL ALIENATED BECAUSE JEWS FROM ABROAD ARE
ALLOWED TO IMMIGRATE AND RECEIVE FULL RIGHTS AS ISRAELI
CITIZENS, WHILE ARABS FROM ABROAD CANNOT IMMIGRATE UNDER
THE LAW OF RETURN. THIS CAUSES INEVITABLE TENSION
WITHIN ISRAEL, THE REPORT SAID.

8. THE REPORT IS EXPECTED TO BE CRITICIZED BY ISRAEL,
WHICH HAS MAINTAINED THAT ISRAEL'S OCCUPATION IS THE
MOST BENEVOLENT IN HISTORY. END TEXT

9. UNDER THE HEADLINE "U.S. DIPLOMATS RESPONSIBLE FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT" AND ATTRIBUTED TO WOLF BLITZER
THE POST PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE ON MARCH 14 WHICH
CONTAINED ESSENTIALLY THE SAME INFORMATION BUT WITH
THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL POINTS: "THE U.S. EMBASSY
IN TEL AVIV AND THE AMERICAN SULATES (SIC) IN JERUSALEM
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ARE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S
REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISRAEL AND THE ADMINISTERED
TERRITORIES SUBMITTED TO THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS
COMMITTEE LAST WEEK, U.S. OFFICIALS SAID YESTERDAY.

10. "AMERICAN OFFICIALS SAID THAT U.S. DIPLOMATS ON
THE SCENE IN ISRAEL AND THE ADMINISTERED TERRITORIES
STUDIED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL
MONTHS. THE REPORTS SAID THAT 'PROPAGANDISTIC
CHARGES OF MISTREATMENT OF ISRAELI ARABS ARE WITHOUT
FOUNDATION,' ALTHOUGH ARABS LIVING IN ISRAEL 'PROPER'
FEEL ALIENATED AND DO NOT FEEL THAT THEY HAVE FULL
EQUALITY. IT SAID THAT PRISON CONDITIONS IN BOTH
ISRAEL AND THE TERRITORIES' ARE SATISFACTORY.'

11. "RESIDENTS OF THE TERRITORIES HAVE FREQUENTLY
BEEN EXPELLED FROM THEIR HOMELAND ONSUSPICION OF
TERRORISM OR ANTI-ISRAELI POLITICAL ACTIVITY, IN
VIOLATION OF THE GENEVA CONVENTION, THE REPORT SAID.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY IS CIRCUMSCRIBED IN THE
TERRITORIES, BUT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS
'RELATIVELY UNINHIBITED.' "

12. A GRUP OF 12 ARAB AND JEWISH LAWYERS
DEMONSTRATED OUTSIDE THE ASHKELON PRISON ON MARCH 13
IN SUPPORT OF THE PRISONERS WHO ARE HOLDNG A HUNGER
STRIKE. THE LAWYERS WERE SUPPORTED BY ABOUT 40 OTHER
PERSONS. THE DEMONSTRATORS ASKED TO BE PERMITTED INTO
THE PRISON BUT WERE REFUSED AND SUBMITTED A LETTER TO
THE PRISON AUTHORITIES CLAIMING THAT THE REFUSAL
ILLUSTRATED THE TRUE STATE OF PRISON CONDITIONS. END
UNCLASSIFIED.

13. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL: IN OUR PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS
WITH MFA OFFICIALS WE HAVE INFORMALLY SUGGESTED TO
THEM THAT THE GOVERNMENT BE AWARE OF THE CONTINUING
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INTEREST OF FOREIGN JOURNALISTS IN THE ASHKELON JAIL
STRIKE. WE SUGGESTED THAT ISRAEL APPEARS TO BE
SUSCEPTIBLE TO CRITICISM ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS ON
THIS ISSUE.
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